THE COMMONWEAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Year within the Year 181
Week by Week 183
Needles in a Haystack 185
America and the Aged ..... Carlton J. H. Hayes 187
The Old Guard Passes ..... William C. Murphy, jr. 189
The Methods of Mr. Barnes ..... James M. Gillis 190
Shepherd of Shepherds (*verse*) ..... John Gilland Brunini 193
Can There Be Religious Peace? ..... Bernard J. Rothwell 194
The Crèche (*verse*) ..... Carol Ryrie Brink 196
Green Sofa and Open Fire ..... Diana Sumner 197
Delayed Letter (*verse*) ..... Marie de L. Welch 197
The Play ..... Richard Dana Skinner 198
Winter Landscape (*verse*) ..... F. S. Jesson 199
Communications 200
Books ..... David Morton, Charles Willis Thompson, Mary Ellen Chase, Broadus Mitchell, John A. Lapp, J. Elliot Ross 202

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THE YEAR WITHIN THE YEAR

AS WE write, the First Sunday in Advent is still to come, but as you read, Advent will be well on its way toward Christmas. For this journal, like all weekly papers, is printed a week before the date it bears. What is written for each number must be composed before the printing thereof; so that in his constant preoccupation to be "timely," the journalist becomes a sort of wizard, trying to conjure up moods or thoughts harmonizing with seasons or events still to come. This in practice means that he must hark back to recollections or reflections concerned with similar seasons or events of the past. This paradoxical situation is even more exaggerated in the case of the monthly magazines. In order to produce the gorgeous Christmas numbers of some of them, a whole regiment of poets and story-writers and artists must labor in the dog-days of summer to turn out snow scenes and blazing Yule logs, decorated with holly and mistletoe; while during the actual winter-time they must turn to summer themes. For we never really can keep up with the times; we are doomed always to be out of date because of the very efforts we so feverishly make to keep abreast of the minute.

This may strike our readers as a rather damaging confession of the inutility of weekly and monthly journalism, by comparison indicating the superior value of the daily paper. The editorial writer for the latter class of periodical can, indeed, be apparently much more spontaneous and contemporary than his colleague of the weekly or monthly review. He may write his Christmas message on the very eve of the great feast. He may glowingly celebrate his country's might, majesty and supreme virtues amid the crash of the fireworks and the oratory of the Fourth of July.

So, it is true, he may; and so, verily, does he—hundreds of him, thousands of him, from Maine to California, from Illinois to Florida, in tens of hundreds of daily papers, printed by the tens of millions of copies; to say nothing about the news reels in the multitudinous theatres, and the great and growing army of radio speakers who interpret or record "timely topics" by day and by night. To which may be added the thousands of clergymen whose sermons have become so closely identified in subject-matter, and often in mode of treatment, with the more sensational type of tabloid news sheet. And as if all this were not sufficient to keep the people informed and enlightened as to what is going on in the world, and why, and to

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what purpose, there are the innumerable conferences, and seminars, and lectures, and conventions of scores upon scores of organizations formed for the express purpose of informing and enlightening the citizens.

Meanwhile, agencies through which the raw material of all this vast business of news-gathering and commentary is collected and distributed, become ever more efficient and widespread. The inventive genius of modern science perhaps reaches its supreme triumphs in matters connected with the intercommunication of mankind. Telegraphs, cables, wireless systems, including the despatch of pictures; airplane transportation; national and international hook-ups of radio speeches; television—all this and, probably, things which are being worked out in laboratories today and which will astound us (if we are any longer susceptible of being astounded) tomorrow, apparently make it quite easy for the average man to obtain a complete picture, an accurate account, of all the things and all the events that matter almost as soon as they happen. It is seemingly the realization of the daring vision of those prophets of humanity who have foretold the triumph of education—the furnishing of adequate and reliable information which, when it is properly understood and applied, must infallibly bring mankind to its golden age of peace and happiness.

Maybe it will. But what about a new problem arising just as we are solving the old problems which have so long retarded the progress of mankind because of the geographical, racial and national factors isolating us from each other—factors which are now being transformed by modern intercommunication?

The new problem undoubtedly has arisen. Most of us feel it, or are conscious of it, although it is not easy to define it clearly or briefly. Its nature may be suggested if we turn to any great newspaper on any day of the week—let us say, to that greatest of all newspapers, the New York Times. We do not say, read it all. Who could do so and still have any of this precious time of ours left for anything else? But just literally turn it over, from page to page. Some days there will be fifty of them: on Sundays nearer a hundred. As you turn the pages, consider to what your attention and your thought are called. Take merely one subject out of many, world peace. Well, here are the news despatches and special articles dealing with the civil wars in China, and the threatened war between China and Soviet Russia; here are the despatches from half a dozen national capitals dealing with various aspects of the Disarmament Conference, and the doings at Geneva of the League of Nations; and the difficulties in the Balkan states; and the unrest of India and South Africa; and the Communist intrigues in half a score of countries where labor struggles or revolutionary movements provide fire for the inflammatory oil of Communism.

Or there is the domestic situation: the aftermath of the crash in Wall Street; the vast efforts of the greatest industrial society of all the ages to maintain and increase its economic stability. And these are only a few of the tremendous topics that the newspaper deals with; and all these things beg for our attention and for our thought, in the midst of the clamor of innumerable other topics and events: murder trials, prohibition sensations, political events, sports (pages upon pages of sports) book reviews, scandals, church unity movements, divorce stories, theatrical news and reviews. It is endless.

Which fact brings us to the special problem alluded to above: the utter inability of the average man to do what all these agencies of modern civilization urge him to do—what indeed the central dogma of that civilization seems to demand, namely, to keep up with the age he lives in; to keep himself abreast of the times; to inform himself about what is going on in the world so he may understand its problems and aid in solving them. His faculty of attention is absolutely insufficient; he cannot begin to spread it over all the subjects put before him; he has not time enough to keep up with the times.

This reflection may serve as well as another to bring us back to the subject of Advent. It ushers in that year within the year of the world which goes its own unvarying course under the surface of the news of the world, and the problems of the world—generally unregarded yet dynamically connected with the exterior year of time, and the doings and problems of the exterior world. The December number of that invaluable periodical, Orate Frates, the organ of the liturgical movement (which we rejoice to see enlarged and greatly improved as proof of the progress of one of the most hopeful works now going on in the Church) is heartily recommended by us to those of our readers who desire to supplement and correct their ordinary reading of ordinary news affairs, by paying some attention to the news which the Church announces at the beginning of each year of the Church; the ecclesiastical year, the Christian year. This is the good, glad news which was first announced two thousand years ago at Bethlehem, and which the Church continues to announce and to expound, to explain, to urge upon us, each day of this spiritual year which is ushered in by Advent. The Missal writes, so to speak, the editorial commentary upon this news. "The season of Advent therefore shows us that Christ is the centre of the whole of the history of the world. It is with the expectation of His coming with grace that it begins, and with the realization of His coming in glory that it ends. And the aim of the liturgy is that every generation of Christians shall play its part in the Divine scheme."

Some of that attention which is baffled and frustrated by the pressure of the news of the world might well be given by Catholics to this news of the Church—the real news, the central, the unperishing news: the news which if understood and properly applied would give us the true and only trustworthy criterion by which to measure and judge all other news.

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE PRESIDENT'S message supplied its Capitol audience with a fairly learned dissertation on the problems confronting federal authority. Interesting by reason of the fulness with which the purposes of the administration are outlined, it is especially remarkable for the definiteness with which Mr. Hoover's own beliefs are set forth. The document is easier to get at, we think, if a line is drawn between the two categories of action which reveal themselves pretty clearly. How impossible it is to govern through purely political mediums has long since been clear. Important practical decisions are stalled in debate, and necessary business routine gets entangled in oratory. Mr. Hoover's resolve to capitalize this truth is evident. He says very little about the three major issues which have excited and ruffled Congress—the tariff, principles of foreign policy and prohibition. Regarding the first he remains well-nigh laconic. On the second he speaks as an enlightened conservative, weary of crusades but eager for progress. As for the third, his views are now those of his predecessors, who have (in popular parlance) tossed the buck of drought back to that public opinion which wrangles, defends and scorns Volsteadism with undiminished vigor. In short, the President appears to have adopted a policy of watchful waiting in so far as Senate and House are concerned, and to have contented himself with the broad principle that the economic needs of the country will sooner or later force such action as can be obtained.

Mr. Hoover Addresses Congress

BUT if no President can govern politically unless supported by congressional majorities absolutely loyal to him, he can make the most of his executive position. The message is replete with suggestions on this point. Reforms are advocated, but none of them is merely ideological and all have been carefully thought out. Here are just a few of the ideas: reduction in the cost of national defense; merging of the Pension and the Veterans' Bureaus; reorganization of the various federal departments, with especial attention to the mass of detail which now swamps the Interstate Commerce Commission; improvement of certain Post-office Department methods. History will probably tell us that the genius of Mr. Hoover lay in his astute divination of these problems and necessities. Even more important, however, is his use of the well-chosen commission (or committee) to carry over into the work of government methods which have proved successful in the history of business and of our democracy generally. The spot-light is no longer focused entirely upon discussion bred of political alignments. Energetic administration has come into its own. Though this broom may conceivably sweep better while it is new, it responds so well to an energetic executive that one may view it with gratitude. It remains to wish Mr. Hoover well in his application of the idea to the situation created by a disturbed and warring Haiti.

SOVIET diction, if we may judge from the reply to Secretary of State Stimson's letter to Moscow in the interests of peace in China, is at least original. In exchange for a formal reminder that the Kellogg pact obliged signatories to keep the peace, Stalin's government sent back a list of more or less opprobrious epithets and an explanation of the justice of the Russian position in Manchuria. To this last everyone assents. The blame for what has occurred must be laid to the door of incorrigible war lords, who have played with dynamite so long that their program is now just one chronic explosion. International intervention might have accomplished something if it could have swung into effective action six months ago. But since a responsible addressee in China could not be found, matters rested until Soviet troops had reëstablished operation of the disputed railway in a manner conforming with existing treaties. We take it that Mr. Stimson's letter was not intended to be a critique of this procedure, but rather a declaration that the powers which had signed the pact were anxious to keep hostilities from developing to a point where the integrity of China might be endangered. Doubtless this involved something like a suspicion that Russia might not know just where to halt. The resultant rejoinder is, therefore, not without a certain almost satirical pertinence. Will the United States go ahead now and proceed to discuss the whole difficult question of China's status and rights?

Moscow Replies

WHAT is the ethical obligation of scientists as a class toward those waterings-down and popularizations of scientific findings which are a chief feature of modern journalism? The specialist in his laboratory, proceeding with the scrupulous caution imposed by the discipline and tradition of his calling, is not, of course, chargeable with the spectacular interpretations of his labors made by writers whose object is to sell articles. Those confident social and prophetic applications of the theories of evolution, biochemistry and genetics which constantly adorn our magazines and newspapers would usually find no place in his dry and rigid exposition of the facts he is sure of. But the applications continue to be made, all the same, based on his material and bolstered up by the authority of his name. And they produce an effect which a first-rate scientist must regard with a mixture of contempt and consternation. If it is mischievous for large numbers of the public to believe that they understand the esoteric refinements of modern research, when in reality they do nothing of the sort, then these articles are mischievous. If half-truths, or truths gratuitously extended, debauch the popular mind, then these articles very often debauch the popu-

Superman Once More

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lar mind. Resistance is made to them, of course—the deprecations of a Millikan or an Eddington, the sound popularizations of a Jeans. But these are individual efforts. Is any corporate corrective work possible that shall be more immediately active than the various scientific institutes can be, and that shall rebuke in the name of science a good many claims made in the name of science?

OF COURSE the categories of scientist and popular prophet are not always mutually exclusive. Occasionally a scientist, a real expert, perhaps, in what can be done to guinea-pigs, will be found publicly supposing that the same things can be done to men at some unidentifiable point in future time, with the happiest results to society. Recently a special article in so superior a newspaper as the New York Times gave an example. Dr. Oscar Riddle, of the Carnegie Institution of Washington, explicitly sponsored therein the statements that "Investigators . . . will probably both find and at least partially control, those factors or agencies which make one man a presidential possibility, another a great money-maker, another a great author and still another simply a day laborer. . . . When on man himself is exercised the power which has already been used on animals, the mind of man will not only grow, it will find freedom." If Dr. Riddle merely professed to speak for himself, we should perhaps say no more than that his idea of human freedom is somewhat quaint. But the article on which he put his imprimatur is headed: Science Pictures a Superman of Tomorrow. Biologists See Him a Man of Superior Intellect, etc. Hence the problem defined in the foregoing paragraph asserts itself. Whatever Dr. Riddle's eminence in his own field may be, are his colleagues willing to let him broadcast under the authority of "science" on a matter of which science can know nothing? Will they underwrite, by silence, the blanket use of the term "biologists," which is certainly deliberately intended to imply that the contemporary masters in that field are behind his opinion? Of course the difficulty of collective repudiation is great. Is it so great as to make repudiation impossible?

THERE are so many things to learn nowadays that it is genuinely difficult to lay adequate stress upon matters of fundamental importance. How, for example, shall one teach young people the nature of American government, as distinguished from a thousand and one details of civic legislation or practice? A very satisfactory way is surely to use the appeal of a significant personality. Thus the students of Webster College, a wide-awake Catholic institution for young women at Webster Groves, Missouri, observe Pelatiah Webster Day every year. The career of this rugged and thoughtful New Englander has been analyzed appreciatively by Hannis Taylor and others. Certainly the spirit in which he faced the problems of democratic government is reflected in several basic conceptions which the constitution embodies. But perhaps Webster College students are the only ones who recall his memory annually and so arrive at a deeper understanding of the program of government which he sponsored. As a reward they acquire, through the official addresses and other mediums, unusual insight into the true relations between the state and the individual, and between civil and ecclesiastical authority. It is all an excellent idea, which might profitably be adopted elsewhere.

Adventures in Patriotism

IT IS reported that American travel in France fell off by 20 percent this year, and the French are very anxious to account for it. Undoubtedly, as they think, considerable numbers of our tourists were deflected to Germany, which has studiously made itself more attractive to visitors every year. But this cannot be the whole story. Accurate statistics will not be available for several years, but when they are, it will probably be seen that American travel in Europe fell off generally in 1929. And it is only natural that it should have fallen off. Such a desire to visit Europe as has seized Americans during the past seven or eight years cannot be kept at its peak because the special circumstances which combined to produce it cannot duplicate themselves. During the war and the period of reconstruction immediately following it, Americans had been confined pretty well to their own hemisphere; then came the new prosperity and leisure and a desire to do something with it. Most important, perhaps, was the fact that the restriction of immigration forced steamship companies to create a tourist third class in order to fill their boats. The novelty of vacationing abroad as cheaply as at home was sufficient in itself to send a good many of our people to Europe. It is the shaking out process which has begun.

Innocents Abroad

IN THE report of the postal service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1929, Postmaster General Brown discloses a deficit of $85,461,176 which is an approximate increase of fifty million dollars over that for the year preceding. Thirty-five percent of this increase is accounted for by the expenses attached to free service for government departments, franked mail, and the air and ocean mail subsidies. It is perhaps too much to expect that the cost of the mails will ever be balanced by income from them, but the country has a right to demand that everything be done to reduce such a staggering annual net loss. The Postmaster General has laid before Congress recommendations for legislation, including authority to charge fees for several services now given free. Some of these recommendations are judicious, but no proposal to relieve the situation can be comprehensive if it does not include a drastic curtailment of the scandalous abuse of the franking privilege. And it may not

Postal Deficit

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be entirely inapropos to determine if the air mail department cannot be put on a different and more remunerative basis. A good percentage of the public has, through sorry experience, discovered that a letter bearing the air mail stamp is later in arriving than one that travels by ordinary mail. This happens repeatedly with letters whose destinations are some three or four hundred miles away. The public has been educated to believe that the air mail is faster; it should not be disillusioned.

IN NEW YORK, where anything may be expected to happen, there has been opened a moving picture theatre to show news reels exclusively, thus giving reality to a dream we have long cherished in common (as the daily attendance indicates) with thousands of others. Of course such a theatre became inevitable with the arrival of the talkies, and the opportunity to reproduce the voices of the notable men and women whom we used to see regularly at the silent cinema, laying wreaths at the tomb of the unknown soldier, smashing very authentic looking bottles across the bows of ships, and what-not. But as it turns out, the least happy offerings of the talking news reels are the interviews which were expected to bring the great so close to their "invisible public." Sound has completed the dehumanization of the eminent. We will go miles to see and hear reels of bizarre doings in the odd four corners of the world, but almost nothing could be less instructive, less exciting, or more criminally boresome than to watch Hiram Doofiddle at his desk in his sumptuous suite on the twenty-first floor of the Doofiddle Building, reading out of the corner of his eye from a manuscript propped behind a barricade of books.

News Reels Only

MONSIGNOR JEAN VERDIER, superior general of the Sulpicians, is the new cardinal archbishop of Paris. Seldom has an episcopal appointment been awaited with more interest, first of all because of the importance of the see and then because of the difficulties which continue to afflict the Church in France. The choice has been warmly approved everywhere, even though it happens to be, in several respects, without precedent. Since the time of the Concordat—and probably for centuries prior to that—there is no other instance of a simple priest's elevation to this central archbishopric. We also believe that never before has a religious superior been singled out for the office. Finally, Monsignor Verdier is a man well past sixty years of age, whose life has been given very largely to educational and scholarly pursuits. He has had a share in the direction of the Institut Catholique, which is the Catholic university of Paris, has long been a famous professor of moral theology, and is renowned as the master of a homiletic designed for the humble but proof against banality. His numerous friends in the United States are honored by an appointment which they consider providential, and of course our own excellent Sulpicians have shared in this remarkable tribute to their community.

The New Archbishop of Paris

WE BELIEVE that the choice testifies to the Papacy's wish to perpetuate the attitude of Cardinal Dubois, who was decidedly moderate in his views of questions involving political action. With reference to l'Action Française, for instance, he remained very firm in upholding the interdict against Maurras, but he did not join those venomous attacks upon sorely tried royalists which were so utterly uncharitable that they did immeasurable spiritual harm. Monsignor Verdier has lived and acted in this same spirit. Realizing that the religious reconstruction of France depends upon thorough cultivation of the spiritual life, he never permitted his gaze to feast upon a romantic past but welcomed every generous decision of the modern spirit. Much in his published writings reminds the American reader so vividly of Cardinal Gibbons that the Holy See's implicit endorsement of them is genuinely memorable. One hopes that Monsignor Verdier will be at the helm of France during many years to come.

NEEDLES IN A HAYSTACK

THERE is a good deal of interesting talk about museums in the current Atlantic Monthly, and with the conclusions which it proposes we have more than a little sympathy. Art is housed on too grandiose and chaotic a scale. Finding one's way to a Goya or a Brueghel in a place like the Metropolitan is like hunting for a gunman in Chicago. In both cases you come upon many lesser lights, some of them very small indeed, while the orb sought for eludes detection. And the poor mortal who goes for the sake of art is in even a worse plight. The thing bursts upon him in varying degrees of splendor until he is bowled over by sheer impact and a splitting headache. It is not that any of us are opposed to museums as such. The Venus of Milo would probably have been turned into stucco long since if the vast purposiveness of the Louvre had remained a dream. And the relationship between canvas and curator is so intimate that it may almost be said to determine the survival of painting. What we all wonder is simply whether existing housing conditions are either socially or artistically right. Mr. Mather feels that he is saying nothing of which "the more enlightened museum officials themselves are unaware" when he avers that "the great American art museums are an eloquent expression of our general tendency toward jumboism."

Now jumboism is always bad (excepting possibly in circuses) but it is particularly destructive in the domain of art. Here it can only mean an eclecticism which substitutes information for quality. Few of the very greatest pictures or statues are available for American museums. But when you set out to establish an art

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collection in the imperialistic spirit of dazzling everybody, you must somehow have greatness thrust upon you. A host of more or less imitative renaissance drawings must substitute for one good Raphael. Long rooms crowded with faded landscapes are expected to coalesce, through some miracle, into an unforgettably masterful unit. The human result is that some dozen persons ultimately acquire the power to discourse on the historical development of oil or egg tempera, while the majority of citizens trot up Fifth Avenue in the deluded hope of improving their minds. Rightly used, art never improved anybody's mind. It has merely, now and then, initiated people into the joy of contemplation and into that secret which we can only term experience of reality.

This tendency is, of course, not limited to museums. It has seeped into all aspects of building and is, perhaps, the greatest flaw in our vastly improved architectural ornamentation. Here for instance is an imposingly large church, the structural style employed in which deserves approval. But not content to wait for time to supply the decorative additions, which tax the resources of masters, those in charge order inchoate masses of fresco and mosaic which transform the whole into an indescribable artistic pandemonium. If one is at all sensitive to values, the total effect is distressing in the extreme. It is much more appalling to behold good and bad mingled in unconscious company than to confront the unadulterated bad. Judas derives all his terrible significance from the fact that he was one of the Twelve. And while the presence of two wofully tawdry frescoes in an otherwise appropriate church is a matter of lesser importance, it actually makes one feel that the whole House of God is cheap and unworthy. There is a somewhat apocryphal story of an American sculptor who was driven to commit arson upon discovering that the owners of a fine colonial mansion had decked it out with cheap copies of the indefatigably atrocious Thorvaldsen. It may, then, be not wholly unreasonable to suppose that diverse fire insurance companies are thankful that so few artists have become converts!

Returning to museums (which may help to explain other aberrations) one feels that circumstances have had much to do with their present plight. They have grown out of an intrinsically healthy desire to conserve treasure. People have made bequests of their pictures and bric-à-brac in the sincere belief that they were sharing the enjoyment of beauty with their less fortunate fellow-men. Always and everywhere the American museum is an expression of generosity and thrift. The court-houses of little towns which antedate the Civil War are literally stuffed with cannon balls and brass buttons which seemed too precious to destroy, and the store of German gas-masks which have recently been added is too large for the imagination to estimate. One hamlet museum we know of actually has hundreds of pioneer grandmother earrings, which if melted in toto would just about suffice to purchase some modern young lady a fur coat. And of course when you get into the realm of pictures you tread on carpets of awe. How precious is a strip of canvas! Not a few earnest communities have hired brushmen with a gift for restoration dutifully to pink-cheek dozens of the dowdiest old portraits imaginable. It is all very natural, very touching, very curious, but it is not art.

Granted the value of extensive collections to the student, it is already obvious that they imperil seriously the development of that public good taste upon which growth in the arts depends. This taste is in large measure present, as indeed it is latent in unspoiled human nature. A moderate dose of learning will do it no harm, and is even necessitated by the science which underlies so much characteristically modern work. But just as we do not give a child to whom we wish to teach English speech a dictionary in lieu of the example of decorous and melodious usage, so also we are on the wrong track if we make the open sesame to art an illustrated catalogue rather than illustrious example. Ruskin was surely right when he told the lady from Edinburgh that she could not learn how to paint in her home town because there was no "great art" for miles around; and so our people should have the great in painting and sculpture where they can see it and where it is not merely a needle in a haystack. The scholar is served by every shred of material which has survived, but the public also has its rights.

It would be a great improvement if all mediocre canvases more than a hundred years old were removed from exhibition galleries and filed away for reference precisely as the great majority of library volumes are kept in the stacks. This would help preservation and consultation. It would also afford simple grandeur of setting for what is abidingly, universally beautiful. Only so will teaching make any progress. "We mark everywhere," says Professor Mather, "as the museums are made increasingly confusing and difficult for the public, an attempt at compensations of a Barnumistic sort—endeavors to wheedle the public into the museums instead of attracting them by the legitimate method of acquiring beautiful things and exhibiting them well." Though many of the best pictures now in America are privately owned, the museums have so many fine things that a discriminating use of them might make them the collective possession of all.

We need that collective possession very badly. The visual arts are, it would seem, the road along which those who seek contact with the beautiful must first walk. Their appeal is much more immediate and impressive than is that of literature or music. Their effect is likewise much more obvious. If some way could be found for bringing the splendor of masterful canvases and statues directly to the consciousness of working crowds, it is a safe conjecture that the general outward appearance of the country would change for the better in a generation. Much has already been done, but the recipe for continued improvement is sound popular education.

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AMERICA AND THE AGED

By CARLTON J. H. HAYES

Last week Mr. Abraham Epstein sketched the dimensions of the old-age problem in the United States. Pertinent evaluation of what has and can be done is afforded in the following paper by Professor Hayes. He finds that Americans have inherited "the Elizabethan system of poor relief," which is no longer adequate to deal with modern needs. The advantages of home care over institutionalism are stressed, and it is shown that public opinion has been steadily advancing toward advocacy of the first—a principle satisfactorily underlying our pension legislation for mothers.—The Editors.

OLD-AGE poverty is a very real problem before us in the United States today. Its causes and present status have been discussed in a previous article. It remains to say something of the proposals which have been made for its solution.

At the outset it is worth noting that while we are today a supremely industrial nation, we have so far made less endeavor to solve the problem of old-age dependency constructively than has been the case in any other industrial nation. While on the European continent legislative committees were struggling with the matter more than a century ago, we are only beginning to give it consideration. I confess to a sense of shame when reflecting that it took the great state of New York more than a hundred years to make any vital change in its poor laws. And the 1929 Welfare Act is entirely optional with the counties and may not be adopted for many years. Nor can we be too proud of the fact that, with the exception of New Mexico, every state in the union still fulfils its obligation to the destitute aged largely through a three-centuries-old system of almshouses, poorhouses or similar institutions.

We should recall that throughout previous Christian ages society recognized its responsibility for its unfortunate members, particularly for the indigent aged. Everybody knows that such responsibility was a cardinal principle of the Catholic Church from earliest times, and that in the middle-ages the Church assumed the leadership in the actual grant of poor relief. The monasteries especially were centres from which charity radiated. The monks not only sheltered the traveler and came to the rescue of the prisoner, but ministered to the sick and protected and aided the poor.

It should also be remembered that the principle and practice of Christian poor relief received a rude setback through the suppression of the monasteries and the confiscation of their endowments in the countries which, in the sixteenth century, became Protestant. In England, for example, the suppression of the monasteries, which was effected through the personal ambition and financial greed of Henry VIII and his henchmen, served, in combination with the contemporaneous transformation of much agricultural land from tillage to pasturage, to spread acute distress among the laboring classes and to make their plight much worse than it had been before. But even here the age-old tradition of community responsibility for the poor could not be permanently ignored, and under Queen Elizabeth the English state began to do what the Church in England was no longer able to do. By the Poor Law of 1601, the state directed the establishment of public poorhouses in the parishes of the land and authorized special local taxation for their maintenance and for the general relief of the indigent.

The Elizabethan system of poor relief was brought over to this country in the seventeenth century and has continued here ever since. With few modifications, it still governs the care of our aged, infirm and needy. We still recognize our social responsibility; we still maintain an elaborate system of almshouses, outdoor relief and private charity. But since the seventeenth century the United States has undergone an economic revolution; we have become largely industrialized and urbanized; and the question at issue today is whether our newer national life has not made necessary a change in the methods of giving poor relief. To the student of history, it seems obvious that seventeenth-century emergency remedies can hardly be made to apply to our twentieth-century problems.

Originally the poorhouse, or "workhouse" as it is still called in England, was largely a home of forcible employment for those who would not work. Many of our own poor farms were originally called "houses of employment." This was one of the main reasons for the large poor-farms which were attached to them. The character of the inmates in these institutions today, however, is quite different. The age level of the group has been steadily rising. The majority of our pauperized aged are made up of self-respecting, hard-working, frugal people who have fallen by the wayside because of conditions which they could not control. Only in rare cases are "shiftlessness" or "indolence" responsible for their condition. On the contrary, thousands of our aged dependents today are begging for an opportunity to continue to work and to earn an independent living. They are denied this opportunity because our Gargantuan industrial development finds no place for them. The stigma of pauperism should not darken and blight the last few years of long lives of toil and honest endeavor.

Institutional care hardly offers a satisfactory solution of the difficulties of old men and women whose dependency is entirely a result of their inability to participate actively in our industrial world, and who are still physically capable of taking care of themselves. That we should provide adequate medical and nursing care for those who are really indigent and un-

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able otherwise to obtain this care, goes without saying. But, unfortunately, only in rare instances do the almshouses of our counties and townships provide adequate medical care. Healthy and self-respecting old men and women do not belong in an institution which shelters in its walls the miscellany of unfortunates: the feeble-minded, the epileptic, the crippled and the imbecile, as well as the retired criminal. Certainly it is inconceivable that we should still tolerate the daily brutality of separating an old wife from her husband after they have lived together for a lifetime, and at a time when they need each other most.

Our present public institutional life for the aged is not only a blot upon our civilization and an indescribable tragedy to those who are forced to enter upon it, but it is also economically unsound. As expressed recently by Lieutenant Governor Lehman:

> Estimates indicate that only one-third of the amount appropriated by the local governments goes for the immediate support of the aged. The other two-thirds are spent for buildings and grounds, maintenance and other forms of overhead. The man or woman kept in his children's home with a small pension does not need separate buildings and hired servants and there remain small jobs that he can do. I doubt whether the cost under state auspices would be greater than that now being borne by the taxpayer, while the lot of the individual would be vastly better.

Students of the problem have repeatedly pointed out that from two to three persons could be supported in their own homes for the cost of supporting an inmate in any decently kept almshouse. In the state of Montana, where a pension plan has been in operation for the longest period in the United States, the average pension amounts to about $219 a year, whereas the cost of the average almshouse inmate amounts to $519 annually.

The advantage of home care over institutional care is a good Christian principle and seems universally acknowledged today. It is the principle underlying our pension legislation for mothers, which has been found sound and effective. Thirty-eight foreign nations, including virtually every industrial country on earth, have for several decades dealt with the problem of old-age dependency through a system of state allowances or through the establishment of compulsory insurance. At least 650,000,000 people are now protected under such social provisions. These nations have recognized that under modern industrial conditions old age must be made a social responsibility, and that the men and women who have given their all in toil and labor are entitled to at least a minimum of comforts when society no longer gives them the opportunity to remain economically independent. Over a million old men and women are drawing pensions from the British government today and have been doing so for over twenty years. Over a hundred thousand are drawing similar pensions in the Irish Free State. The German system of contributory pensions dates back to 1889. It is notable that Catholic groups have been among the foremost advocates and supporters of such measures in Europe.

Encouraging progress has already been made by the movement for old-age security in this country. Since 1914, the legislatures of fourteen states and the territory of Alaska have passed old-age pension bills of one type or another. At this writing, old-age pension laws are on the statute books of California, Colorado, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Utah, Wisconsin, Wyoming and the territory of Alaska. In the state of Washington a bill passed by the legislature was vetoed by the governor. In Arizona a law adopted in 1914 was declared unconstitutional because of the ambiguity and loose wording of the act. In Pennsylvania, the 1923 Old-age Assistance Act was declared null and void because of certain constitutional limitations. At this time pensions are being paid in Montana, Utah and Wisconsin. The California law will go into effect January 1, 1930. In the other states the laws have not been put into operation largely because the adoption of the plan is left optional with the individual counties.

The year 1929 marks the greatest progress in the movement. About fifty bills have been presented this year in twenty-seven state legislatures. In addition to the passage of old-age pension laws in the states of California, Minnesota, Utah and Wyoming, bills have passed one house of the legislature in six other states. Thirteen bills have been presented in the New York Legislature, resulting in the creation of a commission to study the subject. Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt is one of the most ardent champions of pension legislature. The bills, as well as the laws enacted, generally provide for the payment of $1.00 a day to the needy at the age of seventy or sixty-five, provided they qualify in regard to citizenship and residence.

In concluding this discussion I should like to point out further that the adoption of state pension laws for those who have already passed sixty-five years of age seems to be not only a desirable method but also an urgent necessity. Much has been written recently regarding the arbitrary deadline of employment. It is a known fact that employers of labor generally prefer to hire workers under the ages of forty or forty-five. The interrelation of this fact to our lack of constructive social provision for old age is self-evident. Because of the lack of better care, American employers are forced to assume the responsibility of supporting such of their aged workers as can no longer earn a living. For even a ruthless concern cannot with impunity arbitrarily dismiss an older worker who has no other means of livelihood. Such an act causes profound resentment among the workers in the shop, is distasteful to the community at large, and is harmful to the public good-will. On the other hand, individual American employers can neither afford nor be expected to assume the entire responsibility for their older workers regardless of the length of service these have

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given. Generally, even the most humane American industrialists feel that unless an employee has rendered from twenty to twenty-five years of continuous service he is not entitled to a retirement allowance. Industrial establishments have therefore been forced to discriminate against those who could not possibly be fitted into the existing pension system, or against those who might possibly become burdens on their hands. Students of the problem, as well as many employers of labor, feel that the assumption of the responsibility of old age by the state would undoubtedly result in greatly lessening this most unfortunate handicap to middle-aged workers. The immediate responsibility for their old age having been removed from the individual employer, a corporation would be enabled to select its workers entirely upon the basis of physical fitness, without regard to age.

The adoption by the state of an old-age pension system along the lines now in operation in many countries appeals to me therefore as one of the soundest methods of meeting the problem. Such plans have been found workable and of benefit wherever they have been adopted. I hope and expect that the New York Legislative Commission on Old-age Security will present an adequate bill to the 1930 legislature, and that Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt, backed by the innumerable organizations affiliated with the American Association for Old-age Security, will be successful in his worthy efforts, and that the best possible act will be written into our statute books.

THE OLD GUARD PASSES

By WILLIAM C. MURPHY, JR.

NEARLY always there is an element of sadness in the overthrow of a ruling caste, even when its fate is richly deserved. One may have no sympathy with the aristocratic feudalism of pre-Revolutionary France, but it is hard to restrain some feeling of admiration for the aristocrats themselves en route to the guillotine, breathing contempt for their executioners. It always seems a pity that such courage should be wasted.

But the prosaic atmosphere surrounding the enactment of a tariff bill, a thing composed of ad valorem and specific rates, of countervailing duties, of drawbacks, of export debentures and flexible provisions, is not stimulating to the romantic instinct. Perhaps that is why there has been little of glamour surrounding the overthrow of the Republican Old Guard in the United States Senate.

That overthrow has been just as definite, and probably just as irrevocable, as the abolition of the veto power of the House of Lords, but to the general public it seems to have been just so much political maneuvering. So far as can be judged from the rather disadvantageous observation point of the national capital, the public was not greatly concerned.

In other words, it is hardly realized yet that the débâcle of the Old Guard on the Hawley-Smoot tariff bill really means that control of the Senate has shifted from the strongholds of eastern economic conservatism to the agrarian West and South. It means that the Senate has emerged definitely as the more liberal—more radical, if you please—of the two houses of Congress, a situation which doubtless has disturbed the peaceful slumbers of some of the framers of this nation's constitution.

Back of that development there are two factors: the constitutional provision guaranteeing equal representation in the Senate to every state, however small or large, and the more recent amendment providing for the popular election of senators. By virtue of the first factor, the agricultural sections have had it in their power for many years to wrest control of the Senate from the industrial states of the East, but it was not until they began electing their own senators that the people of those sections actually began to recognize their real power.

It is the system of popular elections that makes it possible for senators, with impunity, to break with their own national party organizations. Perhaps in the long run that may prove to be an undesirable thing, leading to a multiplicity of legislative blocs not well adapted to the American federal system. But be that as it may, the situation is here. So long as senators were chosen by state legislatures, their selection, in practice, amounted to designation by state political machines. It costs money to run political machines, hence the machines are always on the side of those who put up the money. Money can be put up only by those who have it, which meant that even in states predominantly agricultural, the political organization was nearly always on the side of the industrial interests—frequently interests affiliated with eastern capitalist groups.

The meaning of the change in election methods can be illustrated by considering the cases of two prominent Republican senators who vote against their party more frequently than with it: Borah of Idaho and Norris of Nebraska. Both are veterans in the Senate, and during their incumbencies there have been several occasions when their respective state legislatures were hostile to them. In the case of Norris, his state has even gone Democratic, but that did not interrupt his tenure of office. Senators so situated can afford to be independent of their party when they choose, and they do so choose frequently.

There is, to be sure, a certain element of poetic justice in the discomfiture of the Old Guard at the hands of western Insurgents of their own party. Back

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in the merry days of the Reconstruction, when the southern states were readmitted to participation in the federal government, the party leaders were alarmed at the prospect that the senators and representatives from the late Confederacy would imperil the Republican majorities in Congress. Having made the South permanently Democratic by constitutional amendments —the Fourteenth and Fifteenth—the northern leaders were forced to seek methods of neutralizing the southern Democratic vote. The result was the admission of numerous new states in the Northwest, peopled—in so far as they were peopled at all—chiefly by former Union soldiers who could be counted upon to vote the straight Republican ticket. So long as control of these new-born commonwealths remained in the hands of Union veterans, the scheme worked. But year by year the Union veterans have died off, and in the meantime there has grown up a new generation more interested in their own economic status than in waving the traditional bloody shirt of a forgotten struggle. This generation has become a bit suspicious that the traditional Old Guard policies work more to the advantage of the East than to that of the West, and their votes in Congress reflect that suspicion.

Gradually there has come a realization that the economic interests of the agricultural West coincide more nearly with those of the agricultural South than with those of the industrial East, and this realization has crystallized in the Democratic-Insurgent coalition that has wrecked the Old Guard tariff bill in the Senate. Inevitably, in the opinion of some observers, this tendency must result in the formation of a new political party. Such a development has been prevented so far by two important obstacles: the race issue in the South, and lack of adequate financing. Perhaps the first-named factor is the less important, because the race issue is of no great moment politically in the agricultural states, while it is becoming increasingly embarassing in the industrial centres. But the lack of adequate financial support is a real hindrance, inasmuch as the party funds of both of the major parties have heretofore come from the industrial centres of the eastern states.

There is also a third obstacle from a legislative standpoint: namely, that the congestion of population in the industrial regions gives the conservative element a large majority in the House of Representatives, a majority which is to be increased in the next congressional reapportionment.

It may be that this consideration has encouraged the Senate Old Guard in the gestures of defiance which have accompanied its overthrow. Perhaps that is why Senator Moses of New Hampshire felt safe in calling the Insurgents "sons of the wild jackass," why Senator Reed of Pennsylvania termed them "worse than Communists," and why Senator Fess of Ohio classified them as "pseudo-Republicans." All of these descriptions are outgrowths of the same psychology as that which led Joseph R. Grundy of Pennsylvania—the animated flag of Old Guard protectionism—to read his recent lecture to the "backward commonwealths" of the West and South on the propriety of "talking darn small" when they "haven't any chips in the [tariff rate-fixing] game."

Whether or not the new-born coalition that now controls the Senate can function as a real working majority remains to be seen. Revolutionary movements are traditionally more effective as opponents that as proponents. It must be said for the Old Guard that in the heyday of its power in the Senate it was a smoothly functioning machine that got things done. But that day is gone and will not soon return.

THE METHODS OF MR. BARNES

By JAMES M. GILLIS

IT WOULD require an intellectual gymnast, and an extraordinarily nimble one at that, to review Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes's latest book, The Twilight of Christianity (New York: The Vanguard Press). It is a product of the hop-skip-and-jump school of literature. On pages 51 and 52, for example, there is a long description of the horrors of the Puritan Sunday. Three pages later President McKinley explains why he kept the Philippine Islands. One page further on, clergymen are advised to read to their congregations from Samuel Hopkins Adams's Revelry rather than waste time asking "God's blessing on the visible head of the state." Next, an obscure newspaper in a remote town of Arkansas is given considerable space to explain that if Al Smith is elected, all Protestant married couples will be living in adultery and all their children will be bastards. On the next page there is a jumble of names—Henry IV of Germany, Pope Gregory VII, Philip Augustus of France, Mr. Marshall and the Atlantic Monthly, Tammany Hall and Cardinal O'Connell. After that we are mercifully given two pages in which to catch our breath, which is promptly knocked out of us by a paragraph on the tango, the maxixe, the shimmy, the hug-me-tight, the kitchen sink, the mucilage glide and the tickle-toe. Then in quick order come fleeting references to witchcraft, sex instruction and lynching, and an attack on the gospel of work by Hendrik Willem Van Loon, who explains that animals "must fill their bellies, and they can only get their bellies full by going through certain muscular motions, but that the moment their hunger has been stilled, they are content to rest." Close on the heels of this interesting if elementary lesson in natural history, we are told that the Catholic

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Church is as bad as the Protestant in the matter of indifference to social injustice.

When you realize that you have covered all that ground—and more—in about twenty pages, you will confess that Mr. Barnes certainly does give you a run for your money. The entire book is like that, and there are almost five hundred pages of it. It reminded me again and again, as I read, of the story of Pat who was boasting to Mike: "They say there's a bye in town who can lep forty feet." " 'Tis a lie," said Mike, "No man living can lep forty feet." "But they say 'tis your own bye Dinny that does it." "Well—*he* might!" Do you tell me that no man living can leap from subject to subject with the agility of a Rocky Mountain goat, and keep it up for 500 pages? Then read Harry Elmer Barnes. *He* might—and he does.

As a matter of fact, he leaps from all this cheap journalistic trash plump into the middle of the deep and treacherous waters of biblical criticism. He speaks with easy familiarity of the "J" source, the "E" source, the "D" source and the "P" source of the Pentateuch. He mentions, offhand, the Codex Vaticanus, the Codex Sinaiticus, the Gilgamesh Epic and the code of Hammurabi. He explains that the Pentateuch is badly named, because it contains eleven books, not five. He admits that his "facts about the Pentateuch" are presented "altogether too briefly and incompletely to give any true picture of the complexity of the situation," but he is confident that he has shown, by merely stating his opinion, that the Bible is a document of purely natural origin. One cannot but admire the nonchalance with which Mr. Barnes mentions Delitzsch and Wellhausen, Harnack, Loisy, Schweitzer and a dozen other famous scholars. As everyone knows who has so much as looked into the profoundly learned and difficult works of these great critics, they demand long, slow, careful study, and one cannot even safely engage upon that study without years of preparation. But Mr. Barnes assures us that he gave years out of his young life to the mastery of the biblical question. Speaking, like Henry Adams, in the third person, he writes impersonally of himself:

> He thoroughly familiarized himself with the essentials of biblical scholarship when an undergraduate, and then abandoned completely the traditional view of the nature and authorship of the Bible.

Already in his late teens, or perhaps his early twenties, he had carefully weighed the arguments for and against the traditional view and had "abandoned" it "completely." However, as we read along in his book, it appears probable that he saved himself a great deal of labor by the simple device of reading only one side. At least there is no evidence in this volume that he even knows the names of the chief opponents of Harnack, Loisy, Delitzsch and Wellhausen. At the end of each chapter he has a number of Selected References. The principal of selection is not indicated, but it seems that biblical scholarship makes even stranger bedfellows than politics. For we find F. C. Conybeare side by side with Joseph Lewis, and Alfred Loisy cheek by jowl with Harry Emerson Fosdick. Of the latter pair, Mr. Barnes rather favors Fosdick. At least he quotes Fosdick a dozen times and Loisy not at all. That seems strange at first, but as we go along we notice that Wellhausen is only named, not quoted, and so is it with Cheyne and Driver and Hermann Hupfeld. In point of fact, none of the great masters is allowed to speak for himself, though there are 120 pages of quotation in the volume.

I say none of the masters of biblical criticism is quoted. But there is one exception—Joseph Lewis. In his case, Mr. Barnes cites volume and page. Let me hasten to say for the benefit of those readers, especially abroad, who are not aware of what great strides biblical criticism has made in America, that Joseph Lewis is a strictly American product and that with the publication of one or two little masterpieces, he achieved for himself a position quite unique in the world of biblical learning. His opus magnum is entitled The Bible Unmasked. Its method and the quality of its scholarship may be readily estimated from one or two characteristic excerpts:

> Like a dissatisfied heir, the human race might well say to God, "If the Bible is the best you can give us, we don't want it. We would be better off without it."

Again, after three pages of quotation from that earlier and perhaps even more famous American biblical scholar, Thomas Paine, we read:

> I challenge every minister of Christianity to refute Thomas Paine's exposure of this all too monstrous lie and the most dastardly piece of imposition ever perpetrated upon the human race.

The erudite will see in those excerpts the unmistakable earmarks of careful scholarship, and we are now in a position to appreciate the unerring judicial instinct that led Mr. Barnes to allot Joseph Lewis a place side by side with Wellhausen, Harnack, and the other great masters.

But it is time to give some examples of Mr. Barnes's own method of biblical criticism. I assemble a few, chosen here and there:

> In regard to the language used by God in dictating the Bible, or more sensibly, the language used by the secular authors of the Bible, it will hardly be necessary to insist that neither God nor the secular scribes used the modern English, German, French, Italian or Russian languages. To scholars it is equally absurd to hold that the Bible was either dictated or written in a so-called Hebrew language, for there has never been any such thing as a unique, special or distinct Hebrew tongue....
>
> The pious German peasant takes it for granted that God spoke to Moses in the German language of Luther's translation. A somewhat more sophisticated order of believers imagine that God spoke in the Hebrew language and assume that there was a specific Hebrew language distinct from the other Semitic tongues of the near

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> Orient. A Catholic is likely to believe that God revealed himself in Latin. . . .
>
> The devout Christian believes that there is no doubt whatever as to just what books were dictated by God, and he takes it for granted that everyone is in complete agreement as to the authentic and approved content of Holy Scriptures. All Christian Bibles are believed to be essentially the same—the difference being primarily variations in typography, format and binding. . . .
>
> The above is a faithful and exact description of the view of the Bible entertained by all orthodox laymen in the United States and by a great majority of orthodox clergymen. . . .
>
> The attitude of the faithful believer is that of the late Mr. Bryan, who informed Mr. Darrow that he would have been ready to believe that Jonah swallowed the whale, provided a statement to this effect existed in the Bible. . . .
>
> If the average reader were to pick up the Bible without any advance knowledge or presuppositions, he would be likely to regard it as an amazingly dull and tedious book in many parts, extremely preposterous in others, contradictory in description, ridiculous and degrading in its basic philosophy and interspersed with passages eulogizing cruelty and brutality or dispensing obscenity.

I think those few paragraphs will sufficiently indicate that posterity will assign Harry Elmer Barnes a place in the Joseph Lewis school of biblical criticism, rather than in the school to which belongs Harnack or Wellhausen or Loisy.

Fearing that some of his readers, though doubtless addicted to serious scholarship, may not possess a Bible, and reluctant to have them miss anything of special interest that it contains, Mr. Barnes presents "an anthology of scriptural obscenity" culled from various "critics" unnamed. He cites book, chapter and verse, and for this favor he will doubtless receive the thanks of undergraduates and other adolescents who have heard that there is spicy reading in the Bible, but who perhaps did not know exactly where to find the specific passages.

However, if the youngsters go poking around in the Bible, they may find a few things not mentioned by Mr. Barnes. They may even come to see why it is that a modern pagan and sceptic like John Cowper Powys (by the way a favorite of Mr. Barnes) pays tribute to the Bible in words like these:

> The Psalms remain, whether in the Latin version or in the authorized English translation, the most pathetic and poignant, as well as the most noble and dignified of all poetic literature. The rarest spirits of our race will always return to them at every epoch in their lives for consolation, for support and for repose.

This important fact about the Bible seems to have escaped Mr. Barnes.

Before dropping the matter of biblical criticism, it may be well to add that Mr. Barnes quotes from one of his authorities a revised edition of the Ten Commandments. He assures us that no "reasonable person could doubt" that it is "a tremendous improvement upon the original Ten Commandments." I have space for only the first, but it will suffice:

> I. Thou shalt understand the factors of progress to be "a changing environment, a modifiable self, a reproductive process, and a conflict of forces resulting in selection of stable organizations and disintegration of unstable ones."

I wonder if it can be that at this point Mr. Barnes descends to a little spoofing. Does he really think Professor Moehlman, writer of the revised Commandments, has hit it off better than Moses? No. No, Mr. Barnes, you are joking. But thanks at any rate for the comic relief.

The Twilight of Christianity has a chapter on Science versus Religion. I must confess that I find it disappointing. Mr. Barnes rather undermines my confidence and alienates my sympathy by calling my dear friend, the late lamented Sir Bertram Windle, among others, a "bitter and unscrupulous enemy of evolution." I arrived at that curious statement on page 314. Again and again the suspicion had been intruding itself that Mr. Barnes does not read the authors he so copiously names. But on page 314 the doubt disappeared. From that moment, I know. Sir Bertram was not bitter, he was not unscrupulous, he was not even an enemy of evolution. No one can have read him, still less have met him and talked with him, without recognizing in him one of the gentlest, humblest and fairest of scholars. So I find myself in a dilemma. Either Mr. Barnes has read Sir Bertram with blinding prejudice, or he has not read him at all. In charity I choose the latter supposition.

The value of the chapter on science and religion may well be guessed from that cruelly unjust appreciation of a great scholar and scientist. One's judgment that Mr. Barnes has not really prepared himself to write on science, is further verified by one's finding in this chapter frequent quotations from E. Boyd Barrett. Mr. Barnes is pleased to call him "one of the most brilliant of modern psychologists," and "a learned Catholic of liberal inclinations." We shall not quarrel over those two disputable propositions. But even Dr. Barrett would, I imagine, disclaim the importance attached to While Peter Sleeps, and The Jesuit Enigma as authoritative sources of information on the relationship between religion and science.

Mr. Barnes does indeed mention a few genuine scientists, in the midst of such lesser representatives of science and religion as William Jennings Bryan, Clarence Darrow and John Roach Straton; and such outdated propagandists as Andrew D. White and J. W. Draper. Among bona fide scientists he cites R. A. Millikan but only to disagree with him. Professor Millikan had said:

> The world is of course "incurably religious." Why? Because everyone who reflects at all must have conceptions about the world which go beyond the field of science, that is, beyond the present range of intellectual

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knowledge. As soon as we get beyond that range we are in the field that belongs to religion, and no one knows better than the man who works in science how soon we get beyond the boundaries of the known.

This passage, reasonable though it seems, irritates Mr. Barnes. All such passages irritate him, for his philosophy is materialistic. He says:

> Psychology, founded upon physiology, neurology and sound methods of investigation, has made remarkable strides in giving us a firm and naturalistic grasp upon the problems of human behavior. It has established the fundamental physico-chemical relationship between mind and body and has completely discredited the older spiritistic interpretations.

That materialistic view of human life is scarcely consonant with the opinion of J. S. Haldane, who says in his most recent volume, The Sciences and Philosophy:

> From its first beginnings the mechanistic theory of life was embarked on a hopeless task. The more recent developments of physiology have only brought this home in a new way. It may be that there are still some physiologists who believe that the progress of physiology is bringing us nearer to a physico-chemical conception of life. But if there are, I can only say that their intellectual vision seems to me to be very defective. In current physiological literature it is still customary, in describing what is known as to different bodily activities, to refer to them as "mechanisms"—for instance, the "mechanisms" of reproduction, respiration, secretion, etc. This is of course a mere matter of custom, handed down from a previous generation. There are perhaps few physiologists who now consider that they have any real conception of these mechanisms. I should like, however, to point out that such a mode of expression is extremely misleading to that miscellaneous body which we call the public.

Since Mr. Barnes is a historian and sociologist rather than a scientist, and Professor Haldane is admittedly one of the world's greatest biologists, I think we need scarcely hesitate as to whose judgment we shall prefer.

Finally, Mr. Barnes makes some incursions into the field of ethics. That he should do so was perhaps inevitable, but none the less unfortunate. His opinions in this realm are even sillier than his infallible dogmatizings in the realm of biblical criticism. Thus far we have, for example:

> The Seventh Commandment, which forbids adultery, might be accepted as sound in general practice, but one can conceive of many conditions in which adultery would not only be permissible but even commendable. Indeed, adultery would seem frequently to be socially, indispensable in certain areas like South Carolina, where there exists no legal ground for divorce.

In that passage Mr. Barnes, I suspect, is making use of the little old dodge of speaking partly in jest and wholly in earnest. But may we, in our stupid way, ask him to be particularly literal at just this point? His compeer, Bertrand Russell, has written in favor of adultery in certain circumstances. Will Mr. Barnes tell us simply if he agrees with Russell? Apparently he does, for he says something that is virtually a quotation from Russell:

> There is not a single item in the sex mores of a conventionally respectable American today which squares with either science or aesthetics.

However, it is not merely sex sin that seems unimportant to Dr. Barnes. He rejects the idea that anything is "sinful":

> One of the most vital and important of the fossils embodied in orthodoxy is the conception of sin. . . . Once we wipe out the validity of the notion of sin there would appear to be slight justification for the ministration and activities of the Church.

True, and still less justification for the ministration of the state or the university or any other organ of civilization. When the notion of sin is lost, all is lost. Chaos will come again. If we have indeed reached the twilight of Christianity and the night falls it will be black as the Cimmerian desert. But perhaps in another volume of the same title as the one we have been considering, Mr. Barnes will explain to us why it is that the twilight of Christianity is so interminably long, and why it is that the sun of religion never sets. That book will be, of necessity, inadequate and inconsequential, but not any more so than is this exposition of twilight.

Shepherd of Shepherds

This minor mystery of the winter morn,
This star, this silver light that leads
To Bethlehem, this earthward trail of God man-born,
O shepherds see!
See not the ultimate thorn,
The flail, the lance, the nail, the eternal tree.

Learn, O shepherds, lorn on chill and stubble hills,
The Word flesh-born, the quickening melody
That bursts upon the many-shuttered night, and fills
The crannied rocks with echoed joy.
Hear not
The shouted scorn beyond Gethsemane.

Peace, peace!
And when the mighty carols cease
Your covenanted hour, O shepherds keep,
For now again the Woman and the serpent meet,
Now Michael's hosts adore the Son of Man.

Kneel, kneel upon the scoured stable floor,
The ox, the ass, the bleating lamb, the sheep,
Shall share your awe before the manger throne.

You are the soil and He the Sower of seed.
You are the lonely, you the meek, and He
Exalter of the lowly heart.
O sing!
You are His sheep, and He the Shepherd King.

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

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CAN THERE BE RELIGIOUS PEACE?

By BERNARD J. ROTHWELL

Recent editorial comment drew the attention of Commonweal readers to the discussion of religious misrepresentations which was sponsored in Boston by the Calvert Round Table. Owing to widespread interest in this method of attacking intolerance, we have invited Mr. Rothwell to review the Harvard conference in more detail. The author is a well-known Boston Catholic citizen who took a prominent share in organizing the Round Table. His article will serve, we hope, to stimulate interest in, and lead to further discussion of this important subject.—The Editors.

THE seminar to consider the relations of Catholics, Jews and Protestants recently conducted at Harvard University under the auspices of The Calvert Round Table of Boston has attracted country-wide attention. Summaries of the discussion were transmitted by the Associated Press to newspapers throughout the United States, and brought many letters from distant sections: in a very few instances, sceptical, but mainly expressive of interest, of approval and of desire to see the movement spread.

The genesis of The Calvert Round Table of Boston, and the seminar, which is the first important step in the furtherance of its aim, is of interest. A dinner about a year ago was attended by some twenty-five Catholic laymen who were addressed by the editor of The Commonweal. Discussion focused upon the increase of bigotry and intolerance, religious and racial, during the previous few years, which reached its climax in the several months preceding the recent presidential election.

The immediate political effect of that manifestation did not concern those present; they were not exclusively of one particular party, nor had they voted exclusively for one particular candidate. As thoughtful American citizens they were, however, dismayed by the wave of intolerance which was sweeping the country. They felt that no greater disaster could befall the republic than its division into bitterly antagonistic religious camps; that the gravest political, social and economic consequences would inevitably follow, unless it were checked effectively, the wave of religious and racial intolerance—particularly in recognition of the fact that the constitution of the United States was founded on the principle of freedom of belief.

With this in view a committee was appointed to consider the advisability of a permanent organization. This committee a short time later reported that such an organization would be highly desirable, and advised that it consist of 100 laymen, in approximately even proportions of Catholics and of various other denominations, including Jews.

The initial meeting was then held and the name "The Calvert Round Table" was decided upon, in recognition of the first Lord Baltimore of the colony of Maryland—the first to incorporate in its constitution the guarantee of religious freedom.

A simple set of by-laws was adopted, setting forth as its sole object:

> To uphold the freedom of worship guaranteed by the constitution, to remove religious prejudice, and to foster among all our people, of whatever religious belief, the respect for each other's sincere convictions, mutual confidence and good-will essential to the perpetuation of the republic.
>
> To encourage the younger men to identify themselves more frequently and more intimately with their fellow-citizens of other religions in civic movements designed for the general good.

The by-laws also specified that

> No one active in political life or holding elective public office shall be eligible for membership.

It was further decided that

> The motives of The Calvert Round Table of Boston would be purely patriotic.
>
> Its methods would be persuasive rather than aggressive.
>
> There would be no criticism of the sincere spiritual convictions of those of whatever faith.
>
> It would not attempt doctrinal exposition, that not being the province of the laity.
>
> It would have no partizan or personal political interest or policy to promote.

Officers and an executive committee were elected, and an advisory committee provided for whose duty would be to

> consider the principal causes of religious animosity, their sources and their effect, and from time to time advise the executive committee as to the most effective means of promoting the aim of this organization.

The members present were requested to send in names of prominent laymen who they believed would be seriously interested in the aim of the organization. In this way the 100 members representing the professions, business and finance, were soon enrolled. It is interesting to note that more than 90 percent of those invited expressed deep interest and accepted the invitation. As completed, the organization consisted of approximately 50 percent Catholics, 40 percent Protestants and 10 percent Jews.

Meanwhile, attention was attracted to the successful seminar held at Columbia University early in the current year—stated to have been the first of its nature on record—and it was determined that as soon as the membership was complete, the first active effort of the Round Table should be the holding of a similar seminar. The proposition was brought to the attention of His Eminence Cardinal O'Connell, who signified

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his sympathy with and approval of the project. Similar expressions were received from the Right Reverend Charles L. Slattery, bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Massachusetts, and from prominent rabbis.

The committee in charge of the seminar had the privilege of drawing upon the experience of the National Conference of Jews and Christians in New York, which had successfully conducted the seminar at Columbia University. They were also fortunate in securing the assistance of Mr. Benson Y. Landis, of the Federated Council of Churches of Christ in America, and Professor Harrison S. Elliott, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, who had demonstrated at the Columbia seminar his ability to handle the difficult problem so as to promote the fullest discussion of controversial questions with the minimum of aggressiveness, to clarify issues and to bring about the spirit of mutual appreciation.

Attendance at the seminar was by invitation. Lists of men and women who, it was believed, would be seriously interested in the discussions were secured from various sources, and individual letters were sent to a large number of adherents of the different faiths. Over five hundred acceptances were received, of which approximately 50 percent were Protestant, 25 Catholic, and 10 Jewish, the remainder unplaced.

The seminar was held in the Fogg Art Museum building of Harvard University. President Lowell and his staff showed a deep interest in the significant event and did everything possible to ensure the comfort and convenience of those in attendance. The first meeting, on November 12, was completely filled. Inspiring addresses were made by President Lowell, Rabbi Harry Levi, of Temple Israel, and the Reverend Michael J. Ahern, S.J., of Weston College. The seminar then divided into three sections, each assembling in a separate room.

Round Table 1 discussed Vocational Adjustments, centering largely upon economic experiences as expressed in the first question:

> What evidence exists regarding vocational difficulties? What are the causes?
>
> (a) Are there restrictions of a religious or racial nature in selecting personnel for positions or professions?
>
> (b) In what particular professions or occupations do members of the religious group to which you belong have the most serious difficulty in securing needed education, employment or recognition?

It was developed that discrimination, religious and racial, does exist against highly qualified individuals of certain religions, notably the Jewish, seeking positions both in the professions and in business. It was however asserted that the discrimination is much less than it is known to have been twenty-five or more years ago.

The head of a school placement bureau stated that in a very large card list of prospective employers, one out of every five cards reads "No Jews." It was found that in many cases discrimination in selection was a matter of expediency, employers believing that it was productive of greater harmony and coöperation. In some industrial cases, the disadvantage of interruption of operation because of the strict observance of religious holidays was cited as a reason. On the other hand, heads of organizations employing large numbers stated that there was actually no discrimination in their establishments; that Catholics, Jews and Protestants were employed without thought to their faith.

It was stated that in many cases antagonism was not wholly based upon religion, but also arose from racial habits or customs.

The inquiry as to the applicant's religion often printed upon employee's application sheets and upon similar sheets issued by employment bureaus was deprecated and its elimination was recommended.

Round Table 2, which was the one most largely attended, discussed Misrepresentation of Religious Beliefs and Practices. A large blackboard was soon covered with questions of various kinds coming under this general head. It was noticeable that the majority of the questions were regarding presumed tenets of the Catholic faith; the policy of the Church; its reputed influence in political affairs and its relation to political action, the Child Labor Amendment, for example; the definition of morals when the Catholic Church asserts papal infallibility in matters of faith and morals; birth control; the confessional; indulgences and miracles; alleged Catholic claim that "outside the Church there is no salvation"; annulment of marriage; authority versus individual interpretation, etc. A good many questions also dealt with Jewish feeling as to the historical accuracy of the New Testament; and false reports as to sacrificial practices of the Jews on certain holidays, as well as alleged proselytizing by certain Protestant bodies, etc.

While there was considerable discussion of these highly controversial questions during the first session, it was, in the main, without any evidence of rancor. At the second session, the various questions regarding the faith of each group were taken up by the representatives of that faith, answered calmly, clearly, concisely, and to the apparent satisfaction of the questioners. The question of proselytizing was discussed at length by clerical representatives of all three faiths. The right to preach everywhere what either believes to be the truth was conceded, but attempt to lure away those of any faith, especially children, by material inducement of whatever nature, was disapproved and condemned. There was throughout an atmosphere of the utmost friendliness and in several cases a remarkable expression of desire for further light. Very many who were present stated that it was the most interesting experience they had ever had.

Round Table 3 considered the question of Community Conflict and Coöperation; the different forms in which there had been coöperative effort of Catholics, Jews and Protestants; the causes of their success or failure; the extent to which they had promoted mutual

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respect for each other's tenets and practices, good-will, friendliness and community-mindedness; whether neighborly prejudices, where they existed, were due to causes religious or racial, whether they were as likely to be as marked in the rising generation, etc.

It was agreed that many of these prejudices were not based solely on religion or race, but on personal contacts; that they were often incidental to the pursuit of old-world habits and customs in the new land, many being characteristic of newcomers among immigrant groups, and tending to disappear in their descendents.

It was stated that Catholics and Jews held aloof from community social service movements because of fundamental religious differences; that Jews are sometimes looked upon with disfavor by private school authorities and social organizations; that those of a particular religion who may be in public school control, mainly in smaller places, sometimes award positions to those of their own faith rather than to equally, or better qualified candidates of other faiths.

The alleged tendency in community politics to support or discriminate against candidates primarily because of their faith, met with general condemnation.

It was argued that group separation in political matters sometimes results from the personality of the leaders, and sometimes is promoted deliberately for selfish ends.

On the afternoon of the second day in general meeting the chairmen of the various Round Tables summarized the proceedings of their respective sessions. These were listened to with deep interest and were freely and intelligently commented upon. Here again the report from Table 2 proved to be the one in which the largest interest centered, and here again, through the able manner in which the chairman of that table, Professor Elliott, concentrated the discussion upon the more vital questions, delicate subjects were discussed with good-will, such slight departures as occurred receiving no encouragement from the audience.

At 12:30 each day recess was taken for luncheon at which all present were guests of The Calvert Round Table at the Harvard Union. This afforded opportunity for more intimate acquaintance and interchange of individual opinion and impressions. It also facilitated full and prompt attendance at the opening of the afternoon sessions.

The friendly contacts promptly established between rabbis, priests and ministers, who previously in many cases were strangers to each other, was a notable feature, and the resulting good-fellowship exhibited was an encouraging promise of future better understandings and mutual appreciation.

Before the close of the final session the following declaration was proposed. It was seconded by two Catholic, two Jewish and two Protestant clergymen, and was unanimously adopted:

> Sincere conviction as to the absolute infallibility of one's own faith and, as a corollary, the error or inadequacy of all other religions, involve no question of the spiritual sincerity of those who differ and who hold firmly to the tenets of their own faith; their inalienable right to the practice of their religion, or their eternal reward.
>
> That such sincere differences are matters of conscience between the individual soul and its Creator and therefore are entitled to universal respect.
>
> That such "agreement to disagree" as to the fundamentals of their respective faiths in no way interferes with their active coöperation in all undertakings making for the welfare of their community. That discrimination—political, social or economic—based solely upon religious prejudice and intolerance, violates both the letter and the spirit of the constitution and is fraught with grave peril to the security of the republic.

The sentiment generally expressed then and since was that similar Calvert Round Tables ought to be established in every good-sized city and in the larger towns, especially in college towns among the students; and that, if the principles stated in the declaration were put into practical effect in our daily contacts, the result would be most pleasing to the Almighty and of incalculable benefit to the individual, the immediate community and to the nation.

The Crèche

Gabriel had gathered moss,
  Justine a tiny tree,
Françoise patted out the sand
  Where Jean Baptiste could see.

They built the little stable up
  And hung the golden star,
They set the tree and spread the moss
  And viewed it from afar.

Their fingers trembled on the box
  That held the holy things—
They took the Blessed Baby out
  And dusted off the Kings.

They made a little shining pool
  From a looking glass;
Françoise placed the shepherd lads,
  Justine the weary ass.

Joseph and heaven-blue Mary fell
  To eldest Gabriel—
The others crowded close to see
  That he placed them well.

Between these two the dimpled hands
  Of little Jean Baptiste
Laid the smiling Jesus down—
  The mightiest to the least.

When it was done they stood about
  All silent in their places,
And years and seas dissolved before
  The still light in their faces.

One said "Joli!" and one said "Bien!"
  A radiance shone on them
As shone once on the shepherd lads
  In far-off Bethlehem.

CAROL RYRIE BRINK.

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GREEN SOFA AND OPEN FIRE

By DIANA SUMNER

CHRISTMAS Eve. The four were together again. The boy back from Yale, the girl from a country boarding school near Boston. They all liked being together and they were not often together. They were very fond of each other, and called themselves the four vagabonds and went off vagabonding on rare and choice occasions. They had such good times then that the mother, who had lived a long time and was rather given to pondering things in her heart, realized in an impersonal and literary way the priceless sparkle and satisfaction of those hours, and wondered if the four of them did not actually hold in their hands the best thing in the world—though fleetingly.

They were all in the parlor trimming the Christmas tree and filling a row of stockings that hung from the mantelpiece. The mother sat on the green sofa wrapping numberless little packages in flowered papers and tying them with colored ribbons and with gold and silver cord. That sofa was an important member of the family. The man belonged to the Pennsylvania Railroad, and had been moved about a good deal, as railroad men are. Roots were constantly being torn up, as one abiding place was changed for another. When they were married the man and his wife had said that, where they had the green sofa and an open fire, there home would be. And so it had proved, for nearly a quarter-century.

The green sofa symbolized home; perhaps the more, that they were perpetually strangers making new beginnings. They carried ashes from one hearth to another, to light the first fire upon. Except in New York where there was only a radiator. So the mother sat on the green sofa (which was very shabby now) and listened, with infinite content, to the little voice of the fire quietly talking on the hearth of the dimly lighted, harmonious room. Firelight on the ceiling, too. Most of the packages came from the five- and ten-cent store. They were useful and funny and dear. Each one of the four was surprising the others, and popping mysterious objects into stockings at the last minute.

Depressing to see how extremely long the stockings became when hung—with a ten-cent bottle of honey and almond cream in the toe, especially the maid's. The family was saved from despair, however, by shoe trees judiciously wrapped, which helped fill the dreary length.

A few really priceless parcels were secretly smuggled under the tree. Perhaps the four said truly that they were the only family on the Main Line that had not one bit of candy. No, not one. The boy was in training—the girl, rather wise.

Daddy hung wreaths, set up the tree, arranged lights, kept always tinkering at something. It seemed so natural for those quiet, expert hands to make everything go right, for that endless strength and kindness to come to every rescue, to be the background of the family life, without which it could not go on. The mother understood this. She watched him with passionate gratitude as their eyes met, and each recalled a Christmas Eve not many years ago, when he lay in hospital in deadly danger, and their two hearts were wrung. The youngsters felt it, but would understand better later on.

It was cozy and merry. Daddy and the youngsters laughed and sang about the tree, which shimmered, gleamed and grew rich; the mother feasted unsated, happy eyes and continually wrapped little gifts.

They sang over a few carols for the morning and then—off to Midnight Mass. It was a green Christmas with a bright moon. Afterward they wished each other a Merry Christmas in the moonlight, drove home and fell heavily into bed, whence they emerged some hours later for a gay breakfast, and the Family Ritual.

It had been the same since they could remember. First, all dashed upstairs and brushed their teeth. Then the mother sat at the piano and played Holy Night in the darkened room, lighted only by that mysterious tree. The family, followed by the household, marched in and sang together in chorus Holy Night, It Came upon the Midnight Clear, and Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem.

Then the boy and girl standing together read the Christmas story from "And there were Shepherds abiding in the fields"—to "the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." They used to recite it but this year they had been too hurried and too lazy to learn it. A radiant pair they were to the parents' eyes, rosy, golden-headed comrades, merry and vital.

They gave the household their stockings from the mantelpiece, and their boxes from under the tree, and then the four were alone, and the fun began. It had always been like that. The dim, rich light, the sense of mystery and leisure, absorbed unwrappings, exclamations all over the room, little bursts of affectionate gratitude, laughs, jokes, real pleasure over the few real presents "lean and keen and clean"—which, they sometimes said, was a good way to live. They were happy together and did not miss too much, those older two, what had been or what might have been. Old pain stirred, but was stilled.

To the mother it seemed as fine gold. But she pondered in her heart, with the ache of human things. Could there ever be another Christmas quite so homely, so innocent, so glad as this?

And as was her practice when the perplexed tumult of life rose strong on the spiritual ear, to threaten the golden moment, she bowed her head: "In manus tuas Domine."

Delayed Letter

I promised to write on my way between there and here,
But for twelve days I, who am so well-friended,
Was lost to everyone, was unknowing and unknown;
There were twelve days, my dear, when my world ended
And I rushed on—I had six thousand miles to go.
(Forgive these numbrs, but numbers alone
Speak to a mind so curiously lost in time and space.)
I was not mad. I remembered days and nights;
I remembered your words; I could have drawn your face
As I last saw it. But these and all were no more to me
Than things I had read or dreamed or heard from a stranger.
I knew no one on earth. I had no thoughts. I was free
Of all that had ever happened to my heart and my mind.
I went on. I met people. I could move and talk
But not with conviction. I was not sure of anything;
My days were blown from me like leaves from a stalk;
I was neither alive nor dead, I was traveling.
Nothing held me. To speak of yesterday or tomorrow
Seemed like pretending importance I could not claim.
For twelve days I possessed neither joy nor sorrow;
I watched the passing of land and the changing of hours.
Though I had promised to write, I could not;
I had nothing to say, nothing to call mine or yours.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Concerning Sherlock Holmes

THE current revival of Sherlock Holmes, with the seventy-four-year-old veteran, William Gillette, himself heading the cast, brings back more than memories. The play emerges from the storehouse of time and stock company production as singularly alive. It is of the present as well as the past. More than that, it reveals the source (inspirational, at least) of so much that has wandered upon the stage since the day that Sherlock first captured public imagination.

William Gillette is co-author of the play based upon Conan Doyle's famous character. He has a right, therefore, to feel no small measure of satisfaction in the long life this play has had. For it has never really died. Stock companies have been playing it all over the land. The present event at the New Amsterdam theatre is less a revival of the play than a return and farewell engagement of Mr. Gillette. And what an interesting figure he makes at his advanced age—erect, agile, the representative of all that is best in the trouper tradition, with that gentle touch of sardonic humor playing about his mouth and eyes that look tolerantly down the years. One thinks of him in such poignant plays as Dear Brutus, and wonders just where, in the present generation of realistic actors, one will find, three or four decades from now, a personality of equal charm and distinction and understanding.

The play itself has antique moments only in the sense of certain stage conventions which have altered in recent years. The lonely gas house, the underground criminal rendezvous seem a little overdrawn and unnecessary in days like these when criminal wealth, fed from liquor profits, easily affords delightful apartments and gilded trappings. Our audiences naturally understand crime best in the unique surroundings it has found under prohibition. We are apt to consider as old-fashioned and unrealistic any play in which criminals are more or less segregated. It is only in its outmoded setting of crime, then, that Sherlock Holmes requires a little good-natured co-operation on the part of the audience. The dramatic situations themselves, even though most of them are familiar stage tricks, have ample vitality to challenge any modern detective play.

It would be unfair, of course, to draw a comparison with that newer type of thriller—the mystery play. Mystery stories are horses of another color. Unlike many of the Holmes stories in book form, the play sticks to a direct battle of wits between Holmes and a known criminal opponent. The audience is in on the whole secret. We have simply the old battle between hero and villain over the heroine—the mechanics of straight melodrama. In a mystery play, the whole technique is different. Two-thirds of the suspense then rests on keeping the audience in darkest ignorance of the real criminal. Many mystery plays of today are lineal descendants of Conan Doyle's stories—but not of this particular play. It is, in many respects, too bad that Gillette, with his perfect type adaptation to the famous detective, did not collaborate in a series of Sherlock Holmes plays, some of them in the form of true mystery tales.

Mr. Gillette is admirably supported by Peg Entwistle as the unhappy Alice Faulkner and a group of excellent character actors. But it is his own inimitable skill and polish which bring out the living values of the old work and restore a vast deal of its original glamour. (At the New Amsterdam Theatre.)

Salt Water

IF ONLY Mr. John Golden would protest less audibly concerning the cleanliness of the plays he produces, one's gratitude toward him would be far more sincere and spontaneous. He has an irritating habit of making at least one of his actors break the illusion of the play midway with a curtain speech, in which Mr. Golden is roundly patted on the back for saving the American drama and using Sapolionic efforts to keep the stage clean. One is just perverse enough to suspect that he is capitalizing cleanliness a little unfairly—like the schoolboy who expects a nickel every time he washes behind his ears. I prefer to think that cleanliness can bring its own reward unadvertised—as in such cases as Philip Barry's Holiday.

Aside from this offensive exploitation, Salt Water, with Frank Craven as its star, is an acceptable and very amusing successor to Pigs, Two Girls Wanted and several other famous Golden productions. The present play, by Dan Jarrett, has the charm of real homeliness and a not entirely threadbare setting. John Horner descendant of a race of seamen, has wanted all his life to sail deep water. The nearest he has come to this is selling pop-corn and peanuts on the Albany night boat. And the nearest he ever comes to his dream is in becoming skipper of a six-minute ferry boat from Sag Harbor to Long Island. How and why he becomes reconciled to this fate, after indulging in far more fanciful projects, and how his domestic differences are settled for him at the same time, form the slim substance of the play.

Like many similar plays, most of its humor depends on the old wise-crack material between husband and wife, on fits of temper and broken dishes, on embattled pride in small heads and on a surrounding character atmosphere of village types. But even old pudding recipes can be tasty in the hands of a good cook. Familiar materials are always delightful in new combinations, or when done to the right turn. There is just enough salt and flavor in Salt Water to make the evening pass most delightfully.

First of all there is Frank Craven himself—always himself, one might say. Given half a chance, he is an unfailing source of fun. Then there is Edythe Elliott as John Horner's stake in matrimony—as engaging as she is irritating. Una Merkel—the slate-pencil-voiced companion of Helen Hayes in Coquette—does a familiar turn as a love-sick village belle, and those two veterans, Claude Cooper and James C. Lane, live up to their familiar best. In addition to all this personality flavor, the play itself has enough suspense and good-natured meandering to complete the dish. (At the John Golden Theatre.)

The Return of Don Giovanni

IT IS incredible that Don Giovanni should have been absent from the American operatic stage for twenty-two years; and it is a bitter commentary on the present state of music to have Signor Gatti-Casazza offer the reason that there were no singers to sing it. It has required twenty-two years for Signor Gatti-Casazza to take his courage in both hands and present it at the Metropolitan Opera House, yet the result, while not perhaps brilliant, was satisfying enough to cause one to wonder why it was not done long before. Surely the present

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cast is no more capable than would have been half a dozen other possible casts since Oscar Hammerstein gave it at the old Manhattan Opera House in the season of 1907-1908. Of course there would have been no Maurice Renaud to play the Don, but then there was none in the current production, just as there was no such Masetto as Charles Gilibert. Yet with these exceptions the cast as originally announced by Signor Gatti-Casazza was fully the equal, and in some respects the superior, of the one of 1907-1908. I say as originally announced, for Rosa Ponselle was to have sung Donna Anna, and her illness forced the substitution of Leonora Corona, a singer of very limited talent, who proved utterly inadequate in one of the most difficult rôles of all opera. Had Miss Ponselle appeared, New York might have listened to one singer at least who would not have been unworthy of the great casts of the past, and we have that experience to look forward to in future performances. Miss Ponselle is probably the only artist now at the Metropolitan who will go down into history as one of the great singers of all time.

With the exception of Donna Anna, there was no character which was not at least presentably given. The Don of Ezio Pinza was a little lacking in flexibility of voice and a good deal lacking in subtlety, yet on the whole he gave an adequate performance. He was not an aristocratic Don Giovanni, but rather a handsome parvenu. But none of this year's audience, or precious little of it, ever saw Maurel or even Renaud in the part, and it was abundantly and perhaps justifiably pleased. Miss Rethberg was the Donna Elvira, and despite her beautiful voice seemed a little heavy for Mozart's music. Miss Fleischer's Zerlina was the most effective of the three women's performances. She sang the music with style, and acted with gusto and lightness. Mr. Ludikar knew the style in which Leporello should sing, even if he did not always attain it, and Louis D'Angelo was amusing as Masetto. The most beautiful singing of the evening was accomplished by Mr. Gigli. Here at any rate was Mozart.

But the real triumph of the evening was the conducting of Signor Serafin. It was he who managed through the power of his personality to weld the performance into a perfect whole, to bring the spirit of Mozart from the orchestra and often even from the singers. For whatever the shortcomings of individual artists, the Metropolitan's Don Giovanni was a unit, and unity has not of recent years always been an attribute of the performances there. Don Giovanni is one of the three or four greatest operas of the world. Let us hope that it has returned to the Metropolitan to take its place in the regular repertoire. It is worth a thousand Toscas and Pagliaccis.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Winter Landscape

He is not wise who will not see
A planet's taut-drawn symmetry
Or the hard logic of a tree.

In him is only careless spring
Who will not see the winter come
In its own finished martyrdom.

He cannot pray, he cannot sing,
He will not care to see us paint
The portrait of a famished saint.

F. S. JESSON.

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THE DESERT AND THE SOWN

Bourbonnais, Ill.

TO the Editor:—The objection taken to the article of Mr. Day, The Desert and the Sown, in The Commonweal of October 2, by the Reverend T. L. Sullivan, C.S.V., on the ground that no comparison can be drawn between the recent condition of unrest in Palestine and the Syro-French clash at Damascus in 1925, does not seem to me well founded. He has evidently failed to notice the distinction made by Mr. Day between the actual cause and the occasion. If I interpret his article correctly, Mr. Day in no way intimates that the Zionist movement in Palestine is the actual cause of the present disturbance, as Father Sullivan seems to believe he does. At the most, it was merely an occasion, as was the inept handling of the complaints of Jebel Druse by the French commissioner, of the Syrian trouble in 1925. The actual cause was the same in both instances. Mr. Day explicitly states: "Back of both is a twofold cause: repudiated promises made to the Arabs when they took up arms against the Turkish overlords, and the age-old European policy of secret treaties." The trend of his entire article shows that the real cause was the violation of a pledge of freedom to the Arabs and the imposition, instead, of an autocratic form of government by France in Syria and Lebanon and by the British in Palestine and Mesopotamia.

The importation, then, by Great Britain, of over a hundred thousand Jews into a land which for centuries has been effectively in the hands of another people was but the kindling of a spark to set aflame the heap of combustibles that had accumulated in the Arab heart for years, and that had been prevented from flaring up long before only by the stifling hand of British intervention. So likewise, the Jebel Druse affair was but the incendiary agent in Damascus. A parallel, then, between the two uprisings not only can be drawn, but, in view of this distinction between cause and occasion, is strikingly obvious.

The parallel of fundamental causes, moreover, is necessary if the rank injustice that has been done the Arabs by the British government is not to be hidden and veiled behind what otherwise would seem but a petty outburst of racial hatred or religious intolerance between the Jews and Arabs. And it is high time that the attention of the world be called to the perfidious double-crossing that has been heaped by Great Britain on a defenseless people, whose dire poverty made them necessarily long-suffering.

Incidentally, I might add that the Zionist movement, whether it was the actual cause of all the trouble or not, has had its own peculiar effect. It has demonstrated to the world, from the violent protests of Jews against the Arabs in most European nations, and more especially in our own country, how tremendous an influence united Jewry exerts, and in face of it, how slender are the chances of justice being meted to the Arabs, unless they are aided by a universal public sentiment, to which they have a righteous claim. Personally, from these current Jewish protests, I am led to conclude that the celebrated German philosopher, Herder, although he may have been prone to exaggeration, was far more than an idle dreamer when he predicted that the time would come when the Christian world would discover itself to have been made the slave of the despotism of Jewish finance.

C. ROACH MURPHY.

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FATHER McCORMICK ANSWERS DR. BRUNI

Milwaukee, Wis.

TO the Editor:—A busy man cannot be expected to devote more than a cursory glance to what reviewers may chance to say about his writings. And in the rush it is readily understandable that in the instance of Dr. Bruni's communication to The Commonweal of December 4, the statement made by this reviewer concerning the Thomistic system as "closely interwoven with the expression of the formularies of the [Catholic] faith," should find itself translated into "closely interwoven with the Catholic faith," and so provide the theme for a somewhat indignant and hasty protestation against the attempt to muzzle philosophy.

A more unhurried reading would have discovered the rather obvious distinction here. But, be that as it may, I cannot be sorry that Dr. Bruni took the time to make for The Commonweal a clear and strong statement of the relations of the Faith to systems of philosophy. Coming from a man of Dr. Bruni's eminence, such a statement cannot fail to be of very considerable value to your readers.

JOHN F. McCORMICK, S.J.,
Professor of Philosophy, Marquette University.

FOR THE LEPERS' CHRISTMAS

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Christmas for most of our fellow-Americans means a day of joys in abundance. But to the thousands of stricken ones in far-off leper colonies the only ray of happiness is that which their consoling faith furnishes.

The saintly priest and holy nun—successors of Father Damien—who are giving their lives for these "remnants of humanity" crave from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith an alms to make Christmas brighter for their stricken and impoverished lepers.

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RT. REV. WILLIAM QUINN,
National Director, Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

FATHER MATHEW ON PROHIBITION

Newark, N. J.

TO the Editor:—A communication appearing in your issue of November 13 quotes a letter by the Reverend Theobald Mathew anent the noble cause of temperance.

However, the date-line of this letter reads, "Cork, January 14, 1854," and I venture the opinion that had it been written in this year of grace, no approval would have been expressed of the principle of prohibition as carried out here in its present form. I believe I can say this unhesitatingly, considering Father Mathew's fervent wish for the destruction of intemperance—"the fruitful source of so much crime." To what extent, may I ask, has the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment contributed toward the achievement of this greatly-desired end?

ELSIE A. GALIK.

The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications on all topics of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.

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(*Excerpts from the Preface*)

Sacred Art

A Lecture by

Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs

The Pius X School of Liturgical Music, which is sponsoring a series of Lectures on Sacred Art in Pius X Hall, 130th Street and Convent Avenue, takes further pleasure in announcing the History of the Roman Rite as the subject of the lecture for December 20. The lecturer will be Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs, Chaplain of the Catholic Club, Yale University, and a member of The Commonweal Editorial Council.

Tickets for each lecture, $2.00

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BOOKS

Discovering Wilson

George Harvey, by Willis Fletcher Johnson. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

IT DOES not take all of Mr. Johnson's 436 pages to convince the reader that he thinks Colonel Harvey a great man, nor that he would be greatly surprised if he were informed that there are those who differ with that view. He writes confidently, as one who is unfolding the inner side of greatness to a thirsty public, sure of returns in the way of gratitude and awe.

Now it is a well-settled conviction with many of Mr. Johnson's fellow-citizens that Colonel Harvey was not a great man, and that much less than 436 pages would contain all that anybody needs to know about him. Mr. Johnson's own conviction to the contrary is so deep-seated that he reveals the unimportant about Harvey in the same tone and to the same length as he gives to the revelation of the important, sure that anything he tells about the great man is of value to posterity. He writes, for instance, many delightful pages about the fact that Harvey was a friend of Mark Twain's, with reprints of highly unimportant letters which only make one wonder how Mark Twain could have written such trash.

Nevertheless, the book contains much information of value. About half of it could very well have been left out, but the other half is worth having. It does settle forever, one is bound to believe, the question of who fished Woodrow Wilson out of obscurity and made him a presidential possibility. It was Harvey who conceived, in 1906, the extraordinary idea that he could take one college president out of a swarm of them and turn him into a President of the United States, and who worked in solitude so indefatigably and so artfully that by 1910 he was on the high road to success.

This was Harvey's one great achievement, and the incredible skill with which he performed the seemingly impossible stunt deserves everything here said about it. In telling the story Johnson reveals a great deal of unwritten history, and what he tells seems undeniably true. In the telling Wilson's figure shrinks rather pitiably, but the facts are there. Wilson appears as hesitating, dubious, easily scared, ready to turn his hand to anything if he can only win the prize, but always needing the stronger hand of Harvey to push him on. It becomes painfully evident that his conversion from conservatism to liberalism was calculated, that even the date of it was calculated, for the effect it would have in getting the nomination.

Mr. Johnson mercilessly puts it beyond a doubt that it was ex-Senator James Smith, the boss of the New Jersey machine, to whom Wilson was beholden for the governorship of New Jersey. Harvey induced Smith to put Wilson over, and Smith had to work like a demon to do it. Wilson rewarded Smith by turning on him as governor and driving him out of politics, as later, when he had come to rely on Colonel House for the nomination, he turned on Harvey and told him he wanted no more of his support. The letters Johnson prints show that Wilson was ashamed of himself for this and tried vainly to square himself with Harvey by paltering with the truth, and that Harvey was big enough not to take advantage of Wilson's floundering attempts at double play. It is a sorry story, altogether, but Johnson has the facts and they are inescapable.

This part of the book is an important, if disagreeable, contribution to history. The trouble with Johnson is that he goes further and tries to make Harvey an all-around king-maker.

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A conference of senators held in Harvey's hotel room in Chicago decided that Harding should be nominated in 1920, and Johnson writes the story as if Harvey had been the ruler of the conference, with the senators eating out of his hand and obeying the crack of his whip. He expects the reader to believe that such men as Penrose (the real ruler of that convention, though he did his ruling over the telephone) Lodge, Brandegee, Smoot and the rest of the old grey woves of the Senate did not know what to do about that nomination and came humbly to Harvey at the Hotel Blackstone for instructions; and that when the great man told them to nominate Harding they all leaped up and barked joyfully and unanimously. Nonsense, Mr. Johnson, nonsense.

CHARLES WILLIS THOMPSON.

Writers of Gaelic

Gaelic Literature Surveyed, by Aodh de Blácam. Dublin: The Talbot Press.

WITH the turn of the year, Ireland will come upon the fiftieth anniversary of the Celtic renaissance. It was in 1880 that Standish O'Grady's bardic History of Ireland was published—a book of such fiery and contagious enthusiasm that it turned the eyes of a whole people to backward gazing and dreaming over a long-obscured past. It was a past marvelously rich in history and legend, haunted by the shapes of great heroes and made gracious by the presence of beautiful and sorrowful queens. It unfolded before the mind of the latter-day Irishman as a new thing, and thrillingly his own. Here, indeed, were the gods that he ignorantly worshiped, declared unto him. He saw himself, for the first time, as the inheritor of a great tradition, existing in separation and integrity for more than two thousand years, and prolific of a whole literature of story and history and poem.

What followed is literary history too recent to require a retelling here. The story of the past fifty years in Ireland is one of almost unprecedented wealth of literary output. It seems nearly incredible that less than fifty years ago the ears of the world had not heard the names of Yeats and Lady Gregory, of James Stephens and Padraic Colum, of J. M. Synge and A. E.—names so well known today that we forget how recently they were silence. It is equally difficult to recall that fifty years ago there was nothing deserving the name of a body of Anglo-Irish literature, whereas today there is a corpus of large proportions and of a distinctive and undeniable genius.

For those of us on this side, a movement so momentous and so sudden begged for an explanation. For many of us, it is still a puzzling matter how this new literature came into being. The inflammatory torch, of course, was the old literature, now rediscovered and presented by O'Grady to English-speaking Ireland in translations and adaptations which preserved much of the spirit of the old stories and poems, and revealed their genius as one akin to that felt by the modern Irishman as the spirit stirring within himself.

It is a fortunate coincidence that this book of Mr. de Blácam's comes on the eve of the semi-centennial of that movement. Here is a complete survey of the literature of two thousand years, set before the reader in a manner which will give him some conception of the pageantry and proportions of Gaelic writings. There was need of a book which should gather the fruits of such special scholarship as has been done and present a connected story of Gaelic literature in the light of the most recent researches. This need is exactly and richly supplied by Mr. de Blácam's book. If it is less detailed and

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less spirited than Dr. Hyde's Literary History, it is also a more orderly presentation and has the advantage of more recent researches.

Here is the story of Ireland's literature from those early anonymous writings prior to and during the Norse invasions, down to the work of living authors writing in Gaelic in Ireland today. In dealing with the literature of each period, Mr. de Blácam has given a picture of the times, and a chronicling of historical events in the midst of which the literature was growing. Bardic institutions and productions are discussed in a manner that will prove of special interest to those who think of ancient Ireland as a tameless and untutored region. And the vicissitudes of the country during the transition from the age of national integrity to the period of a conquered land and a decaying polity are shown in their marked effect on the national soul as revealed in its literary output.

DAVID MORTON.

Children of Importance

The Beautiful Years, by Henry Williamson. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

October's Child, by Donald Joseph. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company. $2.50.

IT IS not easy to write a convincing study of childhood, either in narrative or in essay form. Sentimentality, didacticism, diffuseness are pitfalls too seldom avoided. Moreover, the disturbing knowledge of predecessors difficult to emulate stands irrevocably in the way—Kenneth Grahame's The Golden Age, W. H. Hudson's Far Away and Long Ago, Juliet Soskice's Chapters from Childhood, Percy Lubbock's Earlham. New aspirants must hold their pens with some misgivings from the very start!

It is, therefore, a pleasure to commend the work of Henry Williamson in The Beautiful Years, and of Donald Joseph in October's Child, as thoughtful and careful presentations, the one of an English boy up to nine years of age, the other of a southern child, Lucius Deering, from his sixth year to his first year at college. Mr. Williamson is known to most readers as a naturalist, and as an essayist whose sketches have of late years appeared in our best magazines. In this country, at all events, his novels are less familiar. One must think, indeed, at least to judge from the book in question, that he writes exposition and description far better than narrative. His story, though delicately and poetically handled, is best in those passages given over to portrayals of the seasons, of the times of day as they are borne in upon the imagination of a sensitive child, of bird and animal life, always in his hands so rich in accurate detail. The tenseness of his major situation—a father at a loss to understand his motherless son—never for a moment holds the appeal of his descriptive passages, nor does the idyllic love of Jim and Dolly, a woodsman and a servant-girl. Finally, the child himself and even his sometimes incredible passion for nature do not linger in the mind as do the minute observations of the English countryside—of mowing, of the migrations of swallows, of the habits of the various owls. The book is one of four which together make a work called The Flax of Dream and which present childhood, boyhood, youth and early manhood. First in relation to the others, it is obviously the last to make its appearance.

Mr. Donald Joseph in October's Child is better at narrative than is Mr. Williamson. His people have more life and reality, although it must be said that humor is sadly lacking in both books. One fears, indeed, for these overly serious boys, so

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weighted down with unalleviated impressions! Nor is Mr. Joseph himself either miserly or incapable in the use of descriptive detail. One will not soon forget the southern winds and rains, the old sycamores and the dazzling brilliance of a cardinal against the newly fallen snow. He is perhaps too thoughtful at times, too slow with his story, too reluctant to move on. He is inclined to explain too much, to lose our sympathy by exhausting our patience. And yet in reading these careful pages, one has a comfortable, secure sense of good craftsmanship, of unstinted, unhurried work.

MARY ELLEN CHASE.

Sociology and Religion

Man's Social Destiny in the Light of Science, by Charles A. Ellwood. Nashville, Tennessee: The Cokesbury Press. $2.00.

THESE lectures were delivered in connection with the School of Religion of Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tennessee, on a foundation which committed the lecturer to "a defense and advocacy of the Christian religion." The jacket shows that several important people have praised the book—S. Parkes Cadman, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Francis J. McConnell, Dean Robbins, Mary Wooley and others. The author enjoys distinction as a student of society, being professor of sociology in the University of Missouri.

The volume may be regarded either as a defense of the Christian religion or as an exposition of the working of social forces. If you take him from the first angle, he begs the question by defining Christianity as something indistinguishable from a decent impulse toward one's fellows. If he had addressed himself to a defense of social work, liberal-mindedness and human neighborliness, he would not have been original, but he would have avoided the indirectnesses and sophisms which envelop his argument. If you take him on the second tack of defining the workings of social progress, he is likewise deficient. In the face of a world remade by science and material advance, he clings to the great man theory—"It is the exceptional individuals who generally change the direction of a culture. . . . In the social realm it is someone like Christ, or Luther, or Lincoln, who can think ahead of his age." He is appalled at the thought that social progress, or social change I should prefer to call it, is blind. Objective forces that press upon mankind are not in his picture.

He deplores prosperity. He fails to reckon that idealism need not be born in anguish, but may spring from plenty, and be the more buoyant and effective for the sufficiency that lies everywhere about it.

BROADUS MITCHELL.

What Is Social Charity?

The Catholic Church and the Destitute, by John O'Grady; The Calvert Series, edited by Hilaire Belloc. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.00.

IN THIS book Dr. O'Grady has foreshortened the treatment of a great problem into a brief review of salient facts. He has prepared a book for the general reader which can be read in a brief time, and thus has helped to remove one of the excuses for not being informed on a subject which should be the concern of everyone.

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whole field of charities and at the same time to investigate intensively. No one is better fitted to discuss the relationship of the Catholic Church to the whole problem, for it has been a study of the author for years to determine in practice how the Catholic programs and works of social amelioration fit into the general plans of the community under American conditions.

The book reviews the history of Catholic charities from the middle-ages to the present in chapters on The Christian Doctrine of Charity, Catholic Charities before the Reformation, Catholic Charities and the Catholic Revival, Charity and Social Justice, The Laity and Catholic Charities, Modern Social Work Problems and Technique, and Catholic Charities in Practice. The treatment in each chapter is broad; for those who are unacquainted with the simple principles of the subject, it may perhaps not be found elementary enough. The author of a brief treatise always runs the risk of using expressions which are full of meaning to the informed but blank or perhaps misleading to the uninitiated. Dr. O'Grady has reduced this possibility to the minimum, though the book must not be taken as light reading because it is brief.

Catholic books and articles on social work are frequently given to lamentations for the fall of the social institutions of the middle-ages under which justice and charity had reached in some section of Europe, a high development. Dr. O'Grady gives a good account, briefly, of the contributions of the Church to social justice in the days before the Reformation, but he draws the reader back and holds him to the present-day problems which are not the inheritance of the Reformation but the result of the industrial revolution, the mechanization of industry and the doctrine of laissez faire. A very proper emphasis is put on the need for justice in the social order, while full admission is made of the urgency of effective means of relief.

JOHN A. LAPP.

Early Christian Worship

The Mass of the Apostles, by Joseph Husslein, S.J. New York: P. J. Kenedy and Sons. $2.75.

WE CANNOT have too many good books on the Mass, and Father Husslein's book is good. Each contribution to this inexhaustible subject treats the matter in a somewhat different way, and reaches a somewhat different audience. Father Husslein confines himself to reconstructing the Mass as it was probably said by the Apostles, with very little reference to later developments.

Of course in all this much is left to conjecture, as in the attempt to estimate just what the Apostles carried over from the synagogue service and associated with the Eucharistic "breaking of bread." Other conjectures may be equally plausible. Nevertheless, it is well to emphasize the logical development of the Church from Judaism, and to show the connection between present-day forms and the synagogue. Undoubtedly, the general effect of Father Husslein's treatment is to make the devotional life of those far-off days much more real to us, and consequently to deepen our own devotion to the Eucharist.

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J. ELLIOT ROSS.

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Briefer Mention

Long Ago Told: Legends of the Papago Indians, by Harold Bell Wright. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.50.

THE Papago Indians have never had a written language, but their story-tellers have preserved from generation to generation a wealth of folk-lore of which, Mr. Wright tells us, the tales in this book are but a representative fragment. How "Big Brother"—no aborigines had a nobler conception of the Great Spirit than the Papagos—created man after the subsiding of the waters, how fire was brought from the sun, why we have four seasons, and the other legends are things which "must not be told in the summer-time when the snakes are out." But "In winter when Tahs—the sun—walks far from the earth and the ground is cold and hard; when the beans and wheat and pumpkins have been harvested and fields are bare, and the cold winds blow—then in their winter villages the Indians say to one of the old people who know the legends: 'Tell us the huh-kew ah-kah—the things which were long ago told.'" It is a fascinating volume.

The Book of Job, Its Substance and Spirit, by W. G. Jordan. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

AFTER a short introduction justifying the need of Biblical criticism, the writer gives what he considers to be the earliest form of this poetic work. He leaves out the speeches of Elihu and the stories of the Behemoth and of the Leviathan, which he places in an appendix. He considers the book post-exilic, and refuses to believe that it was ever considered a drama. A free use of the metrical translation by Professor Tayler Lewis is adopted. The book is attractive and readable, and those who may not agree with advanced critical theories can enjoy the poetic beauty that is abstracted from the original.

Medals of Honor, by James Hopper. New York: The John Day Company. $3.00.

MR. HOPPER tells the stories of twelve men who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for services during the great war. His book is truly a saga, because it is entirely a record of heroics. It does not attempt to describe life in the trenches or behind the lines, but is simply a recounting of valiant deeds. Mr. Hopper should try to get at the rest of the Medal of Honor men who are still living. Such books will be badly wanted some day.

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